

Van Dyke^Y House
New Castle, Delaware
New Castle Co.

HABS No. 9-5

HABS
206

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District No. 9

Historic American Buildings Survey
Albert Kruse, District Officer
Old Town Hall, Wilmington, Del.

VAN DYKE HOUSE
400 Delaware Street
Newcastle, Newcastle County
Delaware

Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Newlin T. Booth.

Date of Erection: 1799.

Architect: No record.

Builder: No record.

Present Condition: Good.

Number of Stories: Two, and basement.

Materials of Construction: Brick.

Other Existing Records: See text.¹

Additional Data: See following pages.

¹ See Bennett, G.F., Early Architecture of Delaware, pp.101-105, 147; White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs, 1926, vol. xiii, no. 1.

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There is some confusion usually about the Van Dyke houses in New Castle, as three are thought of in connection with the Van Dyke family. First, the Amstel House (HABS 9-3), which was the residence of Nicholas Van Dyke, President (Governor) of Delaware from 1783 to 1786. His daughter Anne (Nancy) married Chancellor Kensey Johns, the Elder, and they first lived in Amstel House, then ⁱⁿ their own home, the Chancellor Kensey Johns House (HABS 9-6). The second and third houses were built by Nicholas Van Dyke's son, Nicholas Jr., the one at 400 Delaware Street, built 1799 for his own residence, and the one at 300 Delaware Street, built about 1820 for his son, Kensey Johns Van Dyke. It was in this later house that Nicholas Van Dyke's daughter, Dorcas, became the wife of Charles I. duPont, and the wedding was the occasion of a visit from Lafayette. This episode makes the house more important historically, but the former house at 400 Delaware St. is more important architecturally, and important also as the home of Nicholas Van Dyke Jr. who graduated from Princeton, studied law under the Hon. Kensey Johns and attained high distinction as a lawyer. He was a member of the House of Representatives 1799, transferred to Congress in 1809, elected to the State Senate 1816 and The United States Senate 1817.

The proportions and symmetry of the Van Dyke House, its façade as well as the woodwork, make it worthy of note. The house is used as a double house, but the lines of the main

façade and gable-ends have not been destroyed. However, an addition across the southwest façade has entirely obliterated this portion of the original house.

The present owners, Mr. and Mrs. Newlin T. Booth, purchased the house from Mrs. David Stewart, 1170 Josephine St., Denver, Colorado.

- REFERENCES
- Guide to Historic Markers in Delaware, Historic Markers Commission, Wilmington, Del.
 - H. C. Conrad, History of the State of Delaware, Wilmington, Del.
 - G. F. Bennett, Early Architecture of Delaware, Historical Press.
 - Personal research and information obtained from Judge D. S. Rodney, New Castle, Del.

Dorothy A. Mendenhall

Approved

Albert Kruse

Revised 1936, H.C.F.